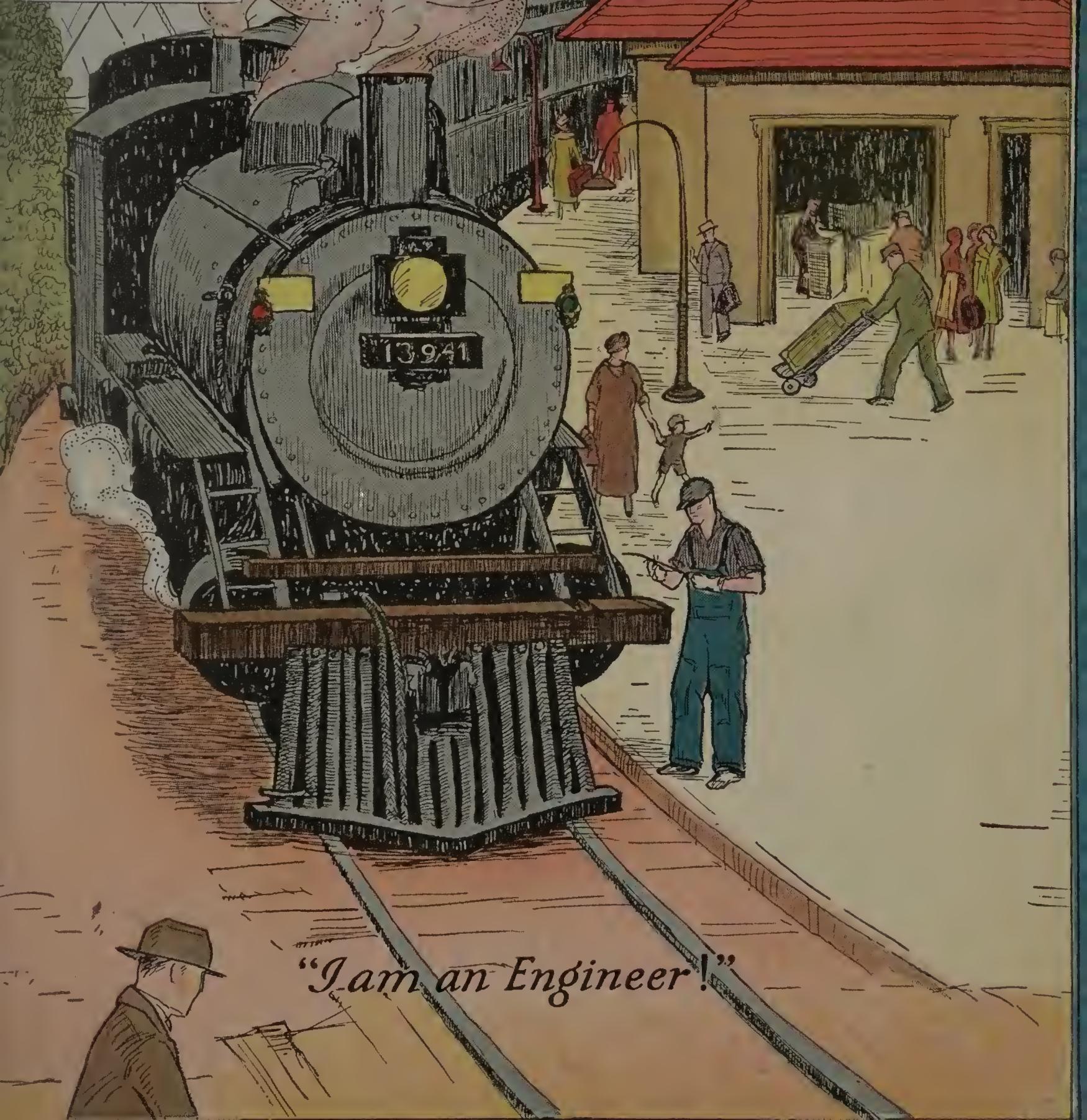


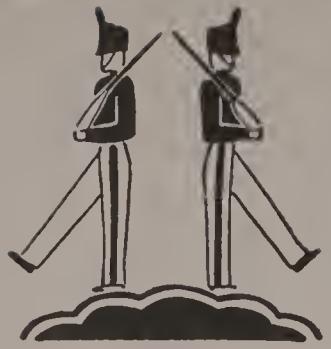
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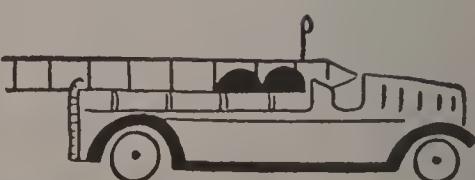
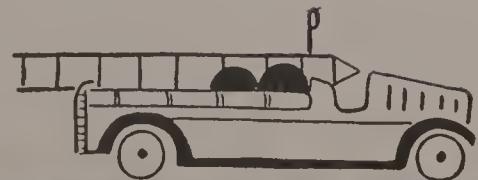


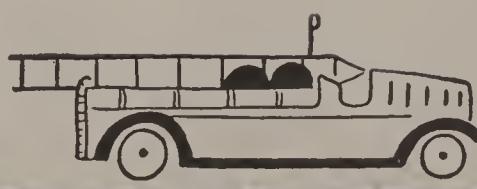
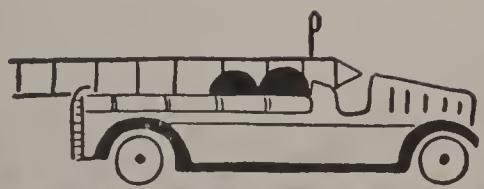
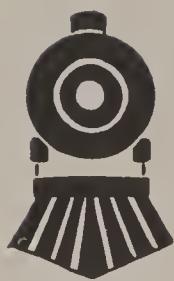
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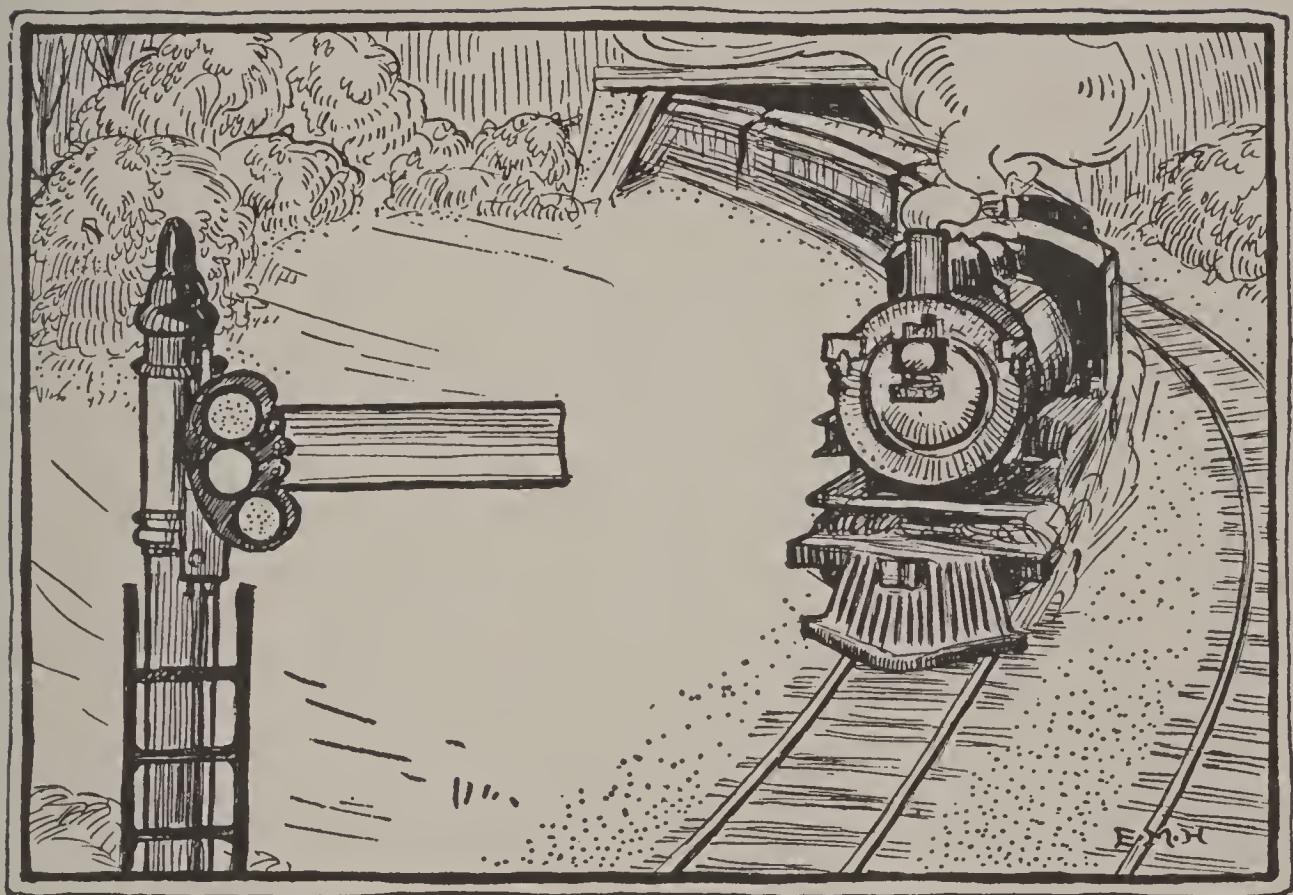
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SIGNALS



Little American Books

Signals

by *arthur*
Bertha M. Rhodes.



Pictures by
Eleanore M. Hubbard

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Little American Books

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JUL 13 1936

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“RED: stop!”

RAISE Alice waved the red lantern which a short time before had been filled with candy. The train came to a sudden stop. All that was needed was a word from the engineer, for this train was made of chairs.

“Our valentines will be late if we stop all the time,” said Catherine.

“They are repairing the track ahead,” said Alice, still swinging the red lantern.

“Better be safe than sorry!” said Donald. “They will never reach there if the train runs off the track.”

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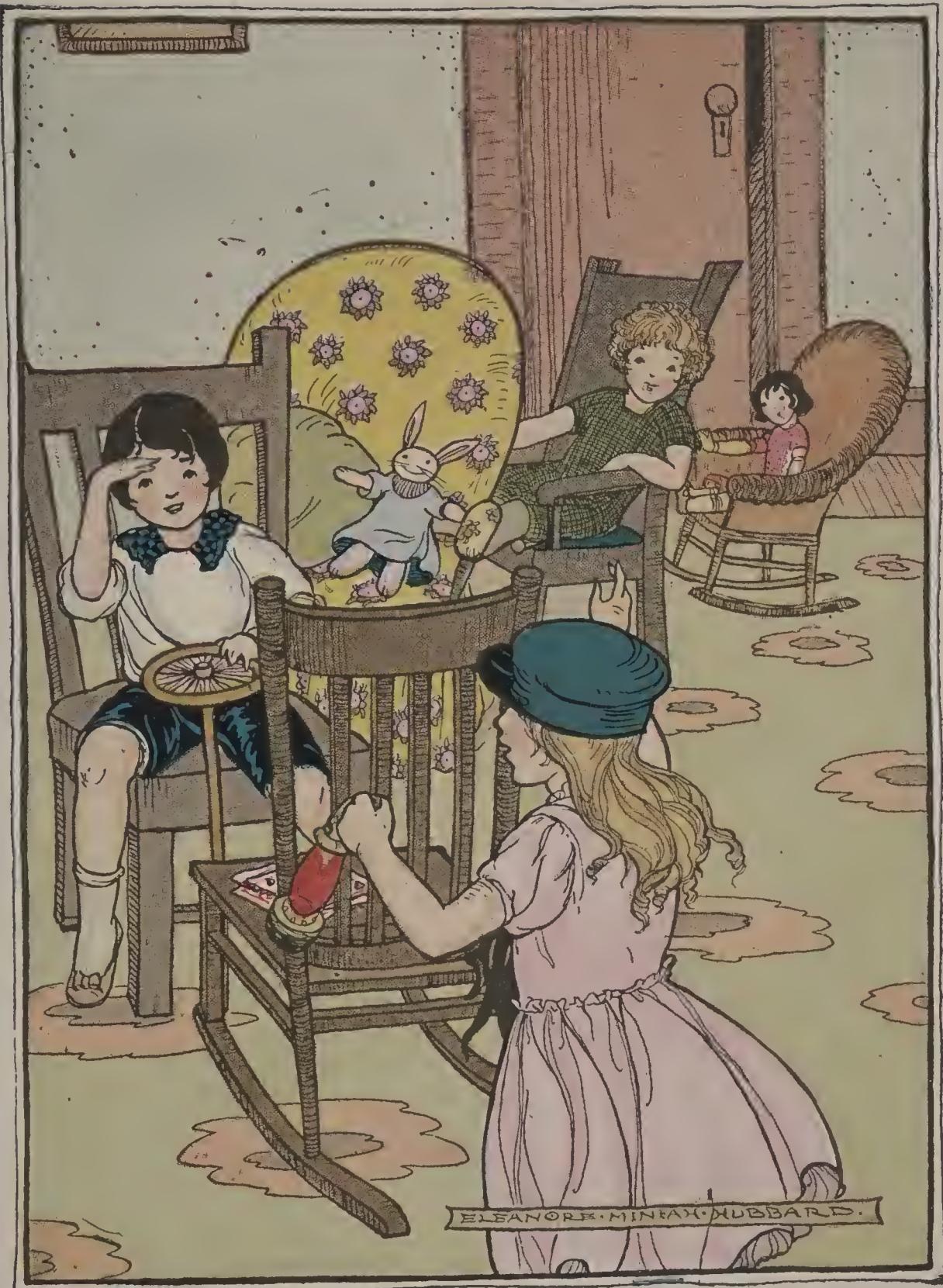
“All’s right!” said Alice, raising and lowering a white lantern which still had a few candies in it.

“Ding! dong! ding! dong!” rang the bell, as the train went on its way to the next station.

This year the children had made their own valentines. They were of all sizes and colors—red, white, pink, blue, gold, and purple, with laces and ribbons and tiny bows, with little flower stickers, cupids, birds, butterflies, angels, kitten heads, puppies, and one of them, the most wonderful of all, had a candy heart with a message written upon it in red letters, saying:

I LOVE YOU.

Alice wished to send one to Mother, one to her teacher, and one to her little friend,



ELEANOR MINTAK HUBBARD.

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Rose. Donald would give to Father, Uncle Raymond and the postman. Catherine would give to Grandmother, Aunt Ellen and Mary, the maid. One valentine was left. To whom should it be given?

“Let’s send it on the train,” said Donald.

“Oh, yes,” said Catherine. “Let’s give it to the engineer on the real train.”

“He has to carry the valentines that go to other cities, and the people too, and take care of them all the way,” said Donald.

“And he has to watch the signals along the track,” said Alice, “and do just what they tell him:

Yellow: slow—

Red: stop!

Green: go.”

“We’ll all send the valentine that goes

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to the engineer," said Donald, "and we'll send him the largest one—the one with the candy heart."

So it came to pass that Alice, Catherine and Donald, with their father, were standing upon the platform when the 10:30 train came puffing up to the station at Missoula the next morning.

The engine was hot and sticky and dirty and tired, just tired! not at all like the fresh shining engine which had started out the night before. It had been working hard pulling the heavy train load of people over the mountains. It needed to go to the roundhouse and be cleaned and polished and oiled and rested before it started back on its way home with another load.

The engineer was tired, too. He took his

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lunch box, and giving his engine over to the men whose work it was to care for it, he went to the engineer's room to wash and rest.

Standing on a nearby track was another engine, polished and rested, ready to take up the burden and pull the train on its way. Standing beside this engine was another engineer, looking at all the great machinery to see that it had been properly oiled and cared for. Everything was as it should be, so he climbed up into the engine and took his seat by the levers that start and stop the engine. Then he put on his gloves and called across to the fireman:

“Is the switch turned right?”

“Yes,” said the fireman, as he rang the bell.



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The engineer pulled a lever ever so little and the engine rolled slowly back to the train. The engineer turned on the steam and tried the brakes. He would not dare start the train until he was sure the brakes were working so he could stop it when he wanted to. As he sat waiting for the signal to start, he looked over on the platform and saw the children and their father. He knew their father well.

“Here is a valentine for you,” said the childrens’ father, as he lifted Catherine up to the engine window.

“Thank you,” said the engineer. He drew off his glove which was black and smudgy on the outside but clean and white on the inside, and took the envelope in his hand. Then he nodded and smiled to them all.



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The conductor came up with orders to be read to the engineer.

“The orders and signals tell the engineer just what to do,” explained the children’s father. “They tell him when to go fast and when to go slow, and where to wait for passing trains. Everyone all along the line is working for the safety and comfort of the passengers.”

It was time for the train to leave. The conductor called:

“All-l-l-l aboard!” The brakeman waved his arm, the fireman rang the bell, the engineer pulled a lever and the wheels began to turn.

“P-u-f-f! P-u-f-f! Pu-ff! Pu-ff! Puff! Puff!” said the engine, and the train was upon its way.

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In a day coach, her face pressed against the window, rode a little girl—alone! Alice saw her first, as the train was passing, and waved her hand to her. The child smiled and waved back timidly. This was a strange country to her and she could understand nothing of what was said. However, she guessed that the children were with their father. She hoped soon to be with her father and mother in the new home among the far away mountains of the west. Her name was Margit.

“If we had only known, we could have brought a valentine for her,” said Alice.

Margit’s Grandmother had taken her down to the big boat and left her in care of friends who were coming to this country. They, in turn, had put her on the train in

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charge of the conductor, who fastened a tag upon her. Upon the tag was written her name, Margit Carlson, and the name of the little village, Hope, where her father and mother would meet her. They had given her a lunch packed in a big box which they thought would last her all the days of her trip, and tucked a dollar into her pocket for any extras which she might need. The lunch was gone.

It is strange how often a little girl gets hungry when there is nothing to do but look out of the window from morning till night. Most of the dollar had gone for a beautiful book with pictures of trains and bridges, cities and mountains, stations and people. Mother would send it to Grandmother, and how glad Grandmother would be! The rest



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of the dollar had gone for candy and fruit. How could such a little girl be expected to know that she might need her money for other things?

Margit spoke Norwegian and could not understand English. The conductor spoke English and could not understand Norwegian. Nevertheless they got on together very well. Margit found a picture of a home and pointed to it.

“Home,” said the conductor. Again Margit pointed to it. The conductor understood. She wanted to know when she would reach home. He hunted through the book and found a picture of a little girl eating in the dining car. She would be home for supper. Margit clapped her hands. Margit pointed to a picture of a lady with some children.



ELEANORE MINEAH HUBBARD

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“Mother,” said the conductor. She pointed to a man.

“Father,” said the conductor. Margit pointed to a little boy.

“Brother,” said the conductor. Margit tapped twice.

“Two brothers,” he said, smiling.

Then Margit hunted through the book. When she found the picture she wanted she tapped twice and covered the picture with her hand.

“Two mothers?” asked the conductor. Margit shook her head no.

“Two sisters?”

“No.” Margit laughed. Then she showed him.

“Two goats,” said the conductor. Margit danced and clapped her hands. Then she

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sat down and patted her chest by way of saying, "Mine."

This did not all happen at once. Each time the conductor came through the car Margit had a new picture for him.

Left alone, Margit again looked out of the window. It was snowing. Faster and faster the snowflakes fell. Mountains and trees were hidden from sight. She could feel the cold wind through the double windows. At last all she could see was a mass of whirling, flying snowflakes.

The conductor came through and handed her a large white envelope.

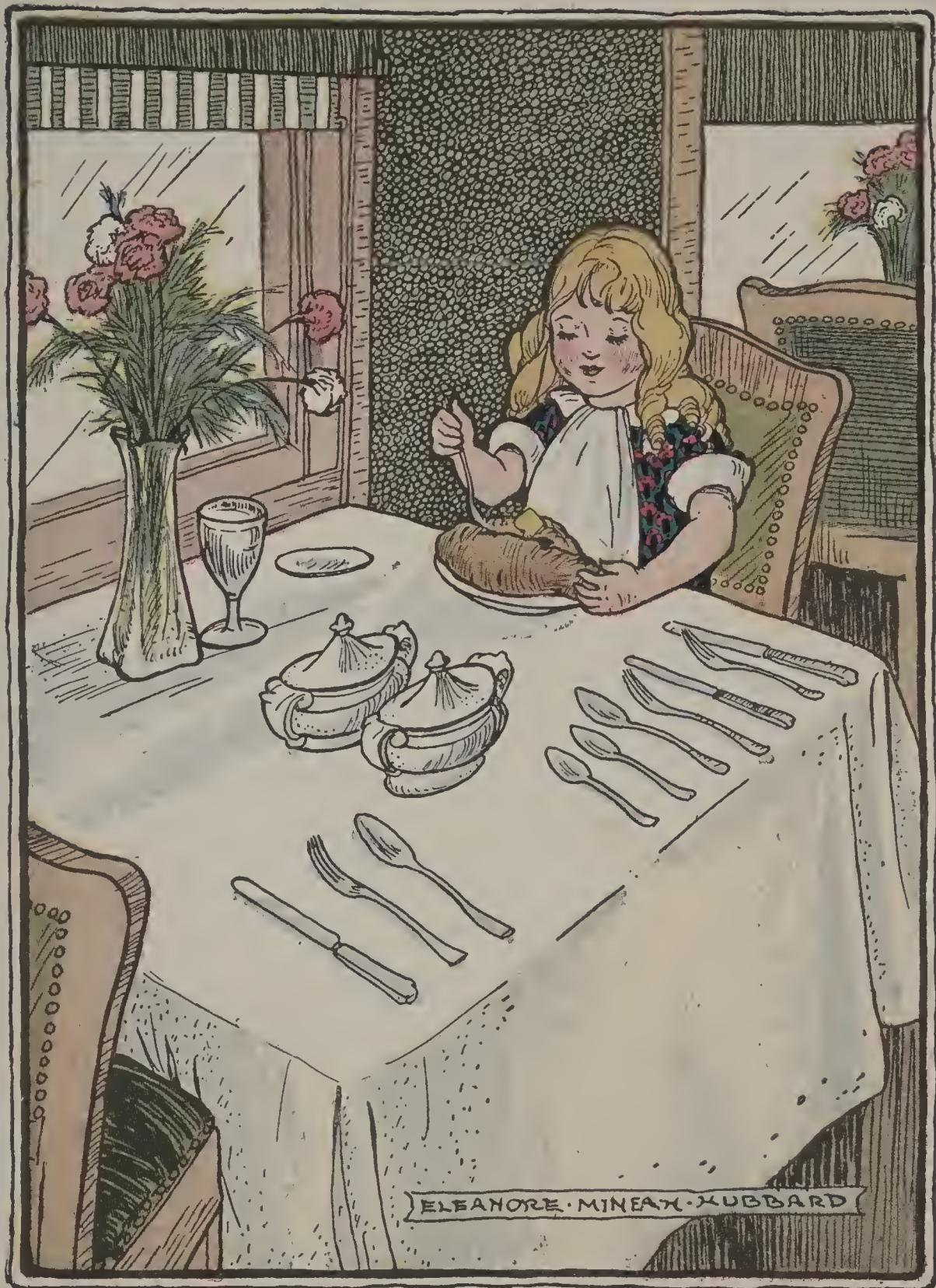
"A letter!" exclaimed Margit, in Norwegian. "Who sent it to me?"

The conductor passed on without a word. It was a beautiful envelope with little gold

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roses in the corners and a red heart pasted over the flap at the back. Margit did not want to open it for fear she might spoil it, so she turned it back and forth and admired it as it was. A long name was printed across the front in big letters. It wasn't Margit's name. Perhaps it was the name of the one who had sent it to her.

When the conductor came through again Margit pointed to the name. The conductor opened her picture book and pointed to an engineer standing beside his engine. Margit understood. The engineer had sent it to her. She had caught a glimpse of him on his way to the engine. He had glanced up at the window and smiled at her. Margit liked him for he reminded her of her father, and Margit loved her father dearly. She



ELEANORE · MINEAH · LUBBARD

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wondered if the engineer had a little girl in his home. The train was going very slowly.

“C-l-i-c-k-i-t-y! C-l-a-c-k!” It had stopped. Some of the passengers left the car and returned. Margit heard them talking. Something was the matter. Could she have understood what they were saying she would have learned that a great bank of snow had come down the mountain side just in front of them where the track crosses the bridge. It was only because the engineer had been on the watch and stopped the train quickly that they were safe. They would not be able to reach Hope before the next day. After awhile the conductor came through again. He took Margit’s book and pointed to the picture of a little girl eating in the dining car.

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Margit shook her head, no.

The conductor took a piece of money from his pocket and held it up.

Margit shook her head. She had no money.

Some of the passengers were watching.

“Pass the hat!” said one of them. The conductor passed his cap. Into it flew nickels, dimes and quarters, until there was plenty for all the meals Margit should need. The conductor slipped them into Margit’s pocket. She smiled and nodded her thanks.

The conductor led her to a car and seated her at a little table with white cloth, shining silver and a bouquet of carnations in the center. There were many tables along either side of the car. The waiter gave Margit prunes, milk toast and a big baked

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potato, split open and buttered inside. How good it tasted to the hungry little girl!

When she had finished eating, the conductor showed her how much money to give the waiter and took her back to her seat. Margit was very happy and comfortable, her cheeks were pink and her eyes shining. The conductor brought her a pillow, and rolling her up in a blanket, drew his hands gently over her eyes to tell her to shut them and go to sleep, and gave her a little good night pat.

Margit awoke in the middle of the night. The lights were turned low, the conductor was gone. The other passengers were sleeping. The train was still standing. The tears came into her eyes. Would she ever find her dear mother and father? Why didn't the train go? Where was the engineer?



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Then she remembered her letter. She took it from beneath her pillow, tore open the envelope and drew it out.

It was the most wonderful letter she had ever seen. It was red and blue and gold, covered with paper on which were stamped little white doves. At the corners were colored pictures of flowers and angels and in the center was a candy heart with red letters. Margit could not read the words but she guessed what it said, for once, back in her home across the water, a lady had given her a candy heart which said, in Norwegian, I LOVE YOU.

“Oh!” sighed Margit, “I’m so glad!”

Margit knew well that I LOVE YOU means I WILL HELP YOU. Her mother and grandmother had both taught her that.

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“The engineer loves me,” she whispered, “and he will care for me. I am not afraid.” Margit pressed her face to the window to see if she could see the engine and the engineer. It had stopped snowing. The night was clear and the stars were shining. Before them, at the bridge was a red light. She saw one of the men take the red light away and put a yellow one in its place. The conductor waved his lantern up and down, the bell rang, the engine whistled and the train began to move slowly.

“C-l-i-c-k-i-t-y! C-l-a-c-k!” After some distance it passed a green signal light and began to speed up.

“C-l-i-c-k-i-t-y! C-l-a-c-k! Clickity! Clack!” went the train, but all the time it was saying to Margit, for the engineer:

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“I love you; I will take care of you.”

When the train pulled into the little town of Hope the next morning, father, mother, brother and sisters were all waiting for Margit.

A month later Grandmother opened a large envelope and found the book Margit had sent. There were pictures of the country through which she had passed. Grandmother looked at each one as though seeing the little girl about whom she had wondered so many times. There was the train with the great engine, ready to start, the coach filled with people, a dining car where sat a little girl eating a very large potato, which might almost have been Margit herself, though Margit had light curls and blue eyes



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and this little girl had dark hair. There was a long chain of mountains, tall evergreen trees laden with snow, a wonderful bridge, and at last the little town of Hope, which seemed to hang upon the mountain side.

Grandmother had such a lovely time with the book. It was almost as nice as taking the trip, and ever since the day when she was a little girl like Margit she had wanted to see wonderful America.

Under one picture Margit had written, with the help of her mother:

“Dear Grandmother, the engineer cared for me all the way.”

“Such a long, long way!” said Grandmother. Then she folded her hands and bowed her head and said:

“I thank you, God, for the good engineer

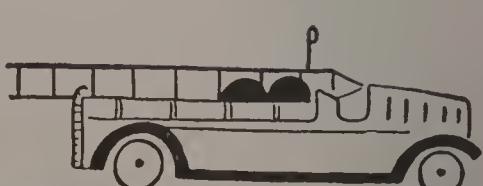
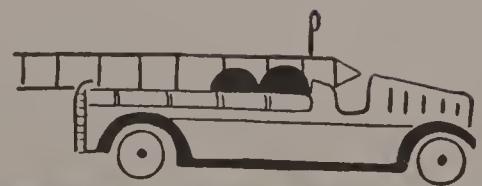


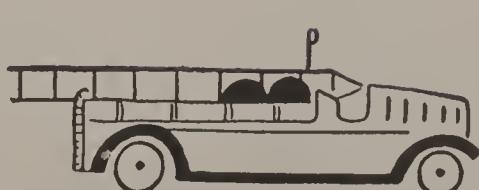
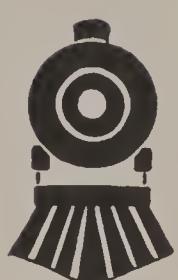
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and all the kind people who helped little Margit find her mother and father in the new Country."

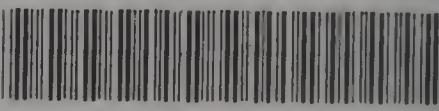


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